

JOYCE IN MEXICO

JOYCE WITHOUT BORDERS convened June 12-16, 2019 in Mexico City, Mexico. The first Joyce Symposium in the Global South, it was also the first to be held in two languages: there were eight Spanish-language panels, with topics from appropriation and translation to youth, religion, and form. There were also opportunities to immerse ourselves in the place, to dine at *Restaurante Covadonga*, to tour the *Museo Nacional de Antropología* and to spend Bloomsday at the Irish Embassy Residence. It was difficult to imagine a timelier moment for a conference that foregrounded Mexican scholarship and culture. Keynote speaker Michael Wood said what others were thinking: 'It's . . . a terrific and important pleasure to be part of a borderless conference at a time when a lot of ugly talk about borders is going on.'

In many ways, the conference was a celebration of world literature, bringing Joyce into dialogue with African, Argentinian, Cuban, Japanese, Mexican and Pacific Island writers. But not all of the participants interpreted the word 'borders' as Wood did. For Peter Kuch, borders were laws or regulations; for Geert Lernout, they were literary distinctions; for James Ramey and Austin Briggs, they were the edges of knowledge. Maisie Ridgway imagined that the text of *Finnegans Wake* was generated by limit-pushing algorithms. Jue Hou treated the word 'Nother' (*U* 35.199) as a holograph, a figure in the interstice of word, image, presence and absence. Jonathan Goldman explored the porous boundary between the object *Ulysses* and its human reader, and Emily Schuck asked where scholarship ended and artistry, and specifically poesy, began.

This was one of the central questions of the conference, the first day of which was devoted, almost exclusively, to *Wake* art. Carol Wade shared pages of her illustrated version of the *Wake*, Neal Kosaly-Meyer performed a 'fragment' of Book I from memory, Gavan Kennedy showed clips of his *Finnegan Wakes* Film Project, and Rita Duffy engaged with the Joycean idea that states are, at least partly, states of mind. In the days that followed, we did *Finnegans Wake* yoga with James Shaw and got our *Ulysses*an fortunes read by Penelope Wade (I was relieved to hear that Buck Mulligan was my past, not my future). By showcasing these projects, the organizing committee challenged the strictures, or conventions, of academia, impelling us to consider new ways of knowing and learning.

Like Duffy, the keynote speakers depicted Joyce as a citizen of the world. Wood contended that, across Joyce's oeuvre, the joke at the expense of the subaltern is inverted: the 'developed' person's

knowledge is 'not interesting'; it is the error, or confusion, of the 'underdeveloped' person that indexes deep understanding. Terence Killen took a narrower view, arguing, by virtue of its creative genesis, that '[t]he boarder incident' in the *Wake* (*FW* 81.33/34) instantiated not only the pirate and renter, but also the lines between nations. Ultimately, he and Wood reached similar conclusions. Wood connected the anti-imperialist joke to the *Wake*, in which he identified a similar opposition to arborescent logic; Killen proved that a well-crafted pun has the power to collapse national and individual conflicts and, simultaneously, elicit sympathy for victims of persecution.

In a subsequent keynote, César Salgado challenged us to bring this global ethos to our scholarship. He described his attempts to use 'Joycean critical technology' to facilitate, and ultimately depoliticize, the study of José Lezama Lima, and reminded us of the work that Lezama and his circle did to further Joyce Studies in Cuba and Latin America. In modeling a new kind of Joyce study – one that showcased Joyce's global inheritors – Salgado whetted our appetites for a plenary roundtable featuring Jonathan Fleck, him, Brian L. Price, Norman Cheadle, Ramey, and Aurora Piñeiro. Participants gave personal accounts of teaching *Ulysses* in Mexico, documenting symptoms and long-term effects of what Salgado dubbed a 'Joycean virus in the world literary system.' When the panel concluded, it was Lernout's turn to say what others were thinking: 'The future of Joyce Studies may be TransLatin.'

Happily, there were some boundaries (professional, personal) the Joyceans upheld. During the past year, the Joyce Foundation amended its bylaws to include a harassment policy. At this conference, its members gave a number of feminist and female-driven papers. Tiffany L. Fajardo spoke passionately about the importance of ALP's testimony; Jack Chellman described her agentifying narrative decisions. James Donelan argued that Joyce's concepts of music and femininity were mutually determined, and Margot Backus re-conceptualized the encounter between Gerty and Bloom, which, she wrote, the author 'constructed with virtually algebraic precision as [one] . . . fully consensual and non-exploitative.' It would appear that our future subfield is not just TransLatin: it is increasingly gender-equitable. To borrow yet another formulation from Salgado, inclusivity is not 'charity'; 'es lo justo.' (Un sourced quotations are from conference papers. Keynote and artist presentations are viewable online at joycewithoutborders.com.)

Zoe Hughes

TRIESTE JOYCE SCHOOL

THE FINAL WEEK OF JUNE 2019 saw a global cohort of Joyceans travel to and from Trieste for the 23rd Annual Joyce Summer School, with all its attendant lectures, seminars and late nights on the grand Piazza. The opening ceremony, hosted by the Embassy of Ireland to Italy, set the tone for the rest of the week: conversation, drinks and comradery flowed freely.

This year, the School was privileged to host two separate filmmakers shooting Joyce-inspired projects. Gavan Kennedy and his team spent many late nights filming Joyceans reading *Finnegans Wake* to the soundtrack of their favourite music for his ongoing *Finnegan Wakes* Film Project, a memorable experience that was a highlight for many of this year's attendees. Godfrey Jordan was similarly filming for the *James Joyce Documentary Project* and he recorded many of the week's academic and social highlights.

Speakers presented every morning from Monday to Saturday and these lectures were a source of lively discussion during coffee breaks and dinners throughout the week. Fritz Senn began the series with a compelling inquiry into 'Joyce's sense of rumour', in which he reminded his audience that for all the purported 'facts' from *Dubliners* to *Ulysses*, both texts rely on rumour, unreliable narration and deliberate omissions to refute definitive interpretations. Laura Pelaschiar followed by tracing the development of gothic forms and figures throughout Joyce's texts, beginning with what she identified as elements of 'tragic Gothicism' in *Dubliners* and culminating in the 'fully comic Gothicism' of the *Wake*.

Fintan O'Toole concluded Monday's lecture series with his presentation on 'reading Joyce in times of Brexit', in which he defined the 'cave of the cyclops' as 'the one-eyed monster of nationalism that endeavours to transmute the pain of submission into a fantasy of dominance'. O'Toole suggested that Joyce's character of 'The Citizen' might be read as an analogue for the contemporary Brexit voter: both, he argued, continue to view the world through the false binary of 'dominance and submission' that lingers as a part of 'latent imperialism' in British culture.

Tuesday's lectures digressed from close readings of Joyce, beginning with Vincent Altman O'Connor's paper on some of Dublin's historic Jewish citizens, identifying Altman 'the saltman' as a potential source of inspiration for Leopold Bloom. John McCourt's paper followed Irish author Frank O'Connor's personal and critical relationship to Joyce's works, arguing that O'Connor's disdain for the 'high modernist aesthetic' of *Finnegans Wake* retroactively corrupted his affinity for Joyce. Wednesday morning concluded with Anne Marie D'Arcy's return to the 'Isle of Saints and Sages', wherein

she identified Joyce's fondness for his Norman heritage as one source of the cultural hybridity that characterizes his works.

Wednesday began with Jolanta Wawrzcka's presentation on the music sampled in 'Penelope', accompanied by a scrupulous collection of digital recordings that enabled her listeners to 'hear' the compendium of songs scoring Molly Bloom's thoughts. Ray Clarke followed by detailing Joyce's encounters with some of the diseases that commonly afflicted children during the Nineteenth Century and the ways in which these experiences influenced his writing. Chris DeVault concluded Wednesday's lectures with a presentation on 'the impossible mourning of *Finnegans Wake*', using Jacques Derrida's theory of 'incomplete' or 'unsuccessful' mourning as a method for identifying ethical affective and political responses to grief.

On Thursday, Cathal Coleman began the morning by enacting a biographical-historical reading of the Citizen as a composite figure, including characteristics from Michael Cusack, John Wyse Power, Oliver St. John Gogarty and other 'bold Fenian men'. Katherine O'Callaghan then followed traces of the pirate Grace O'Malley throughout the *Wake*, identifying solastalgia – or a form of distress caused by cataclysmic environmental change – in a series of weather metaphors related to the interplay between the words 'reign' and 'rain'. Finn Fordham discussed the Catholic institution of confession, and how the 'micro-narratives' of the *Wake* demonstrate Joyce's characters enacting (and re-enacting) the cycle of sin, confession, judgement and penance.

Friday's panels comprised two compelling presentations from Flicka Small and Clare Hutton, focusing on the fleshly and textual bodies of *Ulysses* as they develop across the multiple iterations of Joyce's novel. Small's presentation delved into the 'bowels' of the text, tracing the alimentary habits of Joyce's characters as a potentially motivating source for both affects and behaviours, while Hutton focused on the 'Little Review's *Ulysses*', proposing seven distinct kinds of textual revision that Joyce deployed between *Ulysses*'s initial serialization and its eventual collection and publication as a self-contained work.

Saturday's lectures included a paper from Sean Moloney that pursued traces of the Titanic throughout *Ulysses*. Ronan Crowley concluded the week with a presentation on the importance of Joyce's international migration to *Ulysses*' composition – a fine capstone to a week that underscored the importance of Joyce's European connections, and the cosmopolitanism that makes the Dublin of Bloomsday the 'universal city' its author imagined it could be.

Kevan Decuyper

PALIMPSESTS The Flann O'Brien Conference University College Dublin, 16-19 July 2019

THE INTERNATIONAL Flann O'Brien Society's inaugural symposium was staged in Vienna in 2011. Via Rome, Prague and Salzburg, this biannual event at last came home in July 2019 to University College Dublin, alma mater of Flann O'Brien (real name Brian O'Nolan), not to mention James Joyce. A location at the Belfield campus in Dublin's Southern suburbs, post-1960s architecture scattered across its green fields, also took the conference quite near to Stillorgan where O'Nolan lived out his later years. The modernisation of the university around the early 1970s was touched on in Anne Enright's public reading from her forthcoming novel.

Anyone who had imagined that discussion of Flann O'Brien would quickly prove finite would have been surprised by this four-day conference with four keynotes and numerous parallel sessions. Closing the symposium, society President Paul Fagan noted that his optimism about the field had been vindicated and pointed to certain emergent themes: popular fiction (as approached in Katherine Ebury's keynote on detective novels), animal and non-human life (as discussed by Einat Adar, Yaeli Greenblatt and Alana Gillespie), translation (as in the keynotes by Erika Mihályscsa on Hungarian and Louis de Paor on Irish). Compelling presentations included Maebh Long on the typewriter and the pen, with close attention to their uses in the writing of narratives in *At*

Swim-Two-Birds; Tobias Harris on parallels with Heinrich Heine; Luke Gibbons and Conor Linnie on painting as a key mid-century Dublin context; Catherine Flynn and columnist Frank McNally on *Cruiskeen Lawn* and the *Irish Times*. Non-academic scholars presented incisive, original research: Pádraig ó Méalóid on the obscure *Sunday Dispatch*, James Bacon (wearing his railwayman's uniform) on O'Nolan's love of trains.

The familiar topic of O'Nolan's grudging debt to Joyce needed no further airing here. But knowledge of Joyce deeply pervaded this symposium. Where else outside an actual Joyce event could one casually refer to episodes, stories, lines from Joyce's work in the certainty of being understood? Extra-curricular activities included two performances of O'Nolan's comic writing by the JoyceStagers, one led by performer and scholar Val O'Donnell and one compiled by Robert Nicholson, long-standing curator of Joyce's tower in Sandycove. In remarks after the performance, Nicholson suggested that he had started as a devotee of Flann O'Brien and only later turned to Joyce. But as so often with Flann O'Brien, that might have been a cod.

Joseph Brooker

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OMNISCIENTIFIC JOYCE

BETWEEN 15 and 19 June, the city of Trieste and the Università degli Studi di Trieste will host the 27th International James Joyce Symposium. Trieste, which Joyce dubbed '*la mia seconda patria*', has been named the European Capital of Science for 2020. 'Omniscientific Joyce' is the theme proposed for this year's symposium. Bearing in mind Joyce's interest in and use of science and also the sciences' use of Joyce, we will engage in the ongoing debate about science and literature and, more particularly, science and modernism. We hope to look, too, at the connections between science and popular culture. We also welcome contributions that respond to the conference theme from a creative standpoint, through work in various forms or in different media.

Suggested topics for papers include: knowledge or the pursuit of knowledge; the Two Cultures; the hard sciences; medieval science; the New Science; nineteenth-century and twentieth-century advances in science; climate science; linguistics; ethnography; pseudoscience; digital humanities; posthumanism; omniscient narration; Joyce's know-all. The symposium invites proposals for individual papers and fully-formed panels on the conference theme or any aspect of Joyce studies. Participants are limited to one paper and one non-paper appearance (e.g. as panel chair or respondent). All participants must be members in good standing of the International James Joyce Foundation.

To propose an individual paper, please submit a 250-word abstract giving the speaker's name and

academic affiliation (if applicable) alongside the paper title. To propose a panel, the panel chair should submit a 500-word abstract for the panel as whole providing the names, affiliations and email addresses of all participants, the title of the panel as well as the titles of each individual paper. The name and affiliation of the panel chair and respondent (if any) should be included. Please note that panels should have maximum of four speakers. The panel chair may also give a paper, which is customary to be scheduled last. Please note any date restrictions for individual panellists. The deadline for paper or panel proposals is 2 February 2020. Send proposals to info@joyce2020.org

NOTRE DAME IN ROME

A CONFERENCE ON *GLOBAL ULYSSES* has been convened by the Keogh-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies, University of Notre Dame, in Rome at the Notre Dame Global Gateway, Via Ostilia 15, from 12 to 14 March, 2020. The convenors are Decland Kiberd and Enrico Terrinoni. Other speakers will include Fritz Senn, John McCourt and Franca Ruggieri. Pulitzer-Prize winning novelist Jhumpa Lahiri will speak on Saturday afternoon on themes related to the writer in exile. Anyone interested in attending the conference (on all sessions or any one session) or in seeking further information should email Mary Hendrikson, Assistant Director of the Institute, at mhendrik@nd.edu